

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

British Nation.

 Thursday, March 31. 1709.

AN INTRODUCTION.

THO the Printing this Paper has been long enough Discourst of, and the Gentlemen who have Encourag'd it in *Scotland* by their generous Subscription, are not to be suppos'd ignorant of the Design in it; yet it may not be improper to say something by way of Introduction, at its first appear-

ing in *Scotland*, to signify to the Publick what may be expected from the Author, and what the Author expects from the Age this comes out in.

To begin with the Author, and if he speaks of *South Britain* singly, truly he expects his Usage shall be, as it has been, very indifferent, according, not only to the

the Temper of the Times he lives in, but according to the differing Interests, Parties, Opinions, and Expectations of the People: He has Wrote now five Volumes of this Work, and this, tho it be the first in *Scotland*, begins the sixth,— And to tell you a little what Treatment it has met with in the World, you may take it in a few Words.—The Enemies of our Peace have tacitly Acknowledg'd its Efficacy by their Noise, Uneasiness, and violent Treatment both of the Author and the Work: This he takes for a Testimony to the Wholsomeness of his Work, as the Physician does of the Operation of his Medicine; when the Patient grows Sick, Vomits, surges, and Cries out —: He Professes to Point at, and if possible, to pierce through the Principles of *Jacobitism*, sum'd up in Tyranny and Passive Obedience: To reprove Vice, Expose our Inclinations to Bondage, our Negligence in State Politicks, and in our Trading Politicks, and indeed in all our Politicks: In short, to declare open War with every thing that obstructs the Peace, Prosperity, Trade and Reformation of *Britain*, and if this makes some People uneasy, it is a Testimony both of the *Occasion*, and of the Efficacy of the Work.

For this Reason he is to be Maltreated, his Morals Examined, all his Sins, and more Sins than his own Charged upon him in Publick.—He desires to begin the Reformation he preſſes to, as all Reformers should begin, viz. at himself, and he freely Challenges the World, as he has often done, to Charge on him, *humane Frailty* excepted, the least Crime that can unqualify him to Reprove others, he expects to be as the Prophet, *Without Honour in his own Country*: He expects ill Language, ill Usage, and all sorts of Contempt, from those whose Follies are too plainly Remark'd in these Papers: And he is fully prepared for all this Usage, to which he gives the World no other Return, than pursuing boldly and im-

partially the Work he is upon, regarding no Clamour, no Slander, nor any farther concerning himself in the Noise of the World, than to clear up the Truth of every thing he says, and defend it from Calumny and Reproach.

But *this is not all*, He expects to be Slighted, and often Disregarded, may to be spoken ill of, even by the People he Serves; and that while he is serving them—; That the very Truths he shall Advance, shall receive some Diminution from the Meanness of the Instrument.—*Thus it was* when the poor blind Man reproved the stupid Jews, in their opposing and lessening the Honour of the Miracle wrought by our blessed LORD, in opening his Eyes; *Thou wert altogether Born in Sin, and dost thou Teach us?* And yet all the poor Man said was True, and their Ignorance deserved the greatest Satyr, viz. That they should not know whence our Saviour was, and yet, says the poor Man, *He has opened mine Eyes*. If this Man were now of GOD, he could do nothing.—: So, in Answer to these sort of People the Author says, TRUTH is a simple uncompounded Jewel, recommending it self to the Understandings of all rational Creatures, who indeed are no otherwise rational than by being Capable of Judging, Arguing, and Determining of Truth, and Falshood: TRUTH carries a convincing Efficacy with it, which forces its way into the Souls and Consciences of Men; —*This Truth* receives no Advantage, nor suffers Loss by the Greatness, or Lowness of the Messenger that brings it; Especially when Impartial Judgments weigh in, if therefore the Messenger that brings it does not please you, yet *Good People*, receive the Truth for its own sake, and freely paying Homage to the powerful Influence of Demonstration, Treat the Author of this as you please, he seeks neither Profit nor Applause: Thus far, speaking of *South-Britain*.

But

But speaking of *North-Britain* in particular, and to whom the Introduction is especially directed, he thinks himself obliged to make some Exceptions; And if he thought you would not mistake him, and say he is Flattering you, a Thing he abhors, he would say, he finds Reason to hope for better Treatment here, than he has found elsewhere; Having, generally speaking, seen a greater Propensity to right Information, and Impartial Judging here, than in other Places; Again, he hopes to plead some Merit among you, *Gentlemen of North-Britain*, viz. That this Paper has been, for some time, and will always be, while this Author lives, calculated for the Service of Scotland, to defend her against Reproach, set her right in the Judgments and Opinions of her Neighbours, and set them right in their Judgments and Opinions concerning her, To Represent Scotland right in England, and Represent Things in England right to Scotland; And if this be Impartially pursued, the Author hopes for a better Reception, than in other Cases he complains of; And this brings you to the other part of this Introduction, viz. What you are to expect from him.

It is true, he cannot pretend to give you a full Scheme of his whole Design in this Work; But he hopes, he may say, he has always calculated it for the General Good; And he pretends to say, it shall, on all Occasions, be peculiarly pointed to the Advantage of Scotland, in her Religious, Civil, Trading and Improving Capacities.

The Author is not ignorant, That some People expect it to be a Party Paper here, as it has very much been in England; But he assures you, That what of this appears, will be no more than what is extorted from him, by the ill Temper and wrong Measures of the Opposite People; Even the *Jacobite* or Non-jurant Party shall find no ill Treatment from him, nor much said to them, except what the necessary Vindication of the Church and Government of Scotland requires.

It is true, the Author owns and acknowledges the Presbyterian Church, and ventures now and then in its just Defence, when it is loaded with Calumny and Slander, as is *but too often* its Lot: I say, he ventures to tell some Truth in its Defence; And the Gentlemen of the other Side ought rather to Reply to these Truths, than be angry at their being told;

There is indeed an Unhappy Difference in the Subject, which this Paper, and its Opposers, are Disputing about, viz. That one Side needs only telling a plain Story, Relation of Fact, down-right and well-known Truth, evidenced by it self, and clear in its Nature; And the other, finding themselves sometimes straitned in Matter of Demonstration, are necessitated to fly to some Shiftings and Subterfuges, perhaps, and I hope, more than they would otherways make use of —.

'Tis the Glory of the Church of Scotland, and a particular Encouragement to any Man that engages in her Defence, That there is nothing needful for him to do, in managing that Defence, but a plain Search after, and presenting to the World, Naked, Genuine, and Undisguised TRUTH; He that flies to Forgeries, Fallacies, Sophisms, and Politick Misrepresentings; He that covers Fact with a Mantle of Words, puts Glosses and strained Constructions upon Things, draws forced Consequences, and makes wrong Inferences; In short, he that does any Thing, but merely relate Matter of Fact, and speak plain Truth in Defence of the Church of Scotland, must expect to leave her Cause worse than he finds it.

This Author came a Stranger into Scotland, and at first applied himself, with an Impartial Search, to find out, and make himself Master of all the Niceties, and the secret History of the Controversie about Church Government, between the Episcopal and Presbyterian Churches: He came to this Enquiry perfectly Unprejudiced and Unbiass'd, and therefore fully Qualified to receive right Information: He has read all the Books on either

ther Side, relating to this Controversie, that he could come at, and heard what Parties on either Hand could say; And tho' his Determination is not of much Value, yet he thinks himself obliged to give his Opinion, in relation to what he is upon in this Paper, *viz.* That he thinks the Presbyterian is defended by *Plain Truth*; The Episcopal, by the Helps of *Policy* and *Artifice* —; And yet, tho, he thus declares his Sentiments at first, he will, upon all Occasions, in this Paper, preserve a due Impartiality in his Arguing on either Side, that he hopes shall be Offensive to none —; And whatsoever Side gains by the most Impartial and Unbiass'd Arguing, he thinks it is for the Honour of that Side, and goes a great way to prove her Foundation best established.

The Remainder of this Introduction shall be carried on in the next.

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